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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Second regular session of 1990
CO-ORDINATION QUESTIONS

Mid-term review of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997)

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

The following additional information has been provided by Governments for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General on the mid-term review of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997).

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II. SUMMARY OF REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

1. The Secretary-General has received additional replies from eight Governments containing their views concerning a global mid-term review of the World Decade for Cultural Development in 1993.

2. The Government of the State of Bahrain emphasized in its reply that the proclamation of the Decade by the General Assembly has injected a great deal of vitality into culture-related events and activities in the world and has promoted national efforts in the field of the interrelationship between human cultures. It welcomed the idea of carrying out a mid-Decade evaluation, in 1993, as "a positive step in the right direction of the evaluation of the progress attained by Member States, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system, including the potential for the origination and development of activities within the framework of the Decade".

3. The Government of Barbados suggested that a mid-Decade review should include:

(a) Creating a new awareness and understanding of the Decade;

(b) Allowing member countries to evaluate their own activities;

(c) Facilitating a close network between Member States, the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) concerning the Decade;

(d) Preparing documentation on all aspects of the Decade;

(e) Providing the opportunity for the countries that are not yet involved, to participate in the developmental programme.

4. In the view of the Government of Barbados, the scope of a mid-Decade review should embrace:

(a) The dissemination of information concerning the review to Member States at a time to allow for adequate preparation;

(b) The preparation of written reports by Member States to the United Nations and UNESCO, outlining national plans for the Decade, achievements and problems encountered;

(c) The convening of a forum at the United Nations to discuss the conclusions of the above-mentioned reports;

(d) The highlighting of any discoveries of new trends in cultural developments in Member States.

5. The Government of France stated in its reply that while strongly supporting and being very committed to the implementation and success of the Decade, it did not believe that the best way of conducting a mid-term review would be to hold an intergovernmental conference in 1993. The French Government explained that out of

four major objectives of the Decade only the first one involved inter-agency co-operation and up to this point this appeared to have been inadequate. It suggested that pilot and joint projects should be prepared. It also suggested that the specialized agencies should indicate new specific projects and activities related to the Decade in their programmes rather than including, under the label of the Decade, activities that they had undertaken long ago. These new activities should be included in the programmes of agencies for the biennium 1992-1993 and next programming cycle of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) beginning in 1992. In this respect, the date of 1993 for evaluating these new future activities would, in the opinion of this Government, be too close.

6. Nevertheless the Government of France believes that an initial evaluation of the Decade could be carried out by the existing and functioning body, the intergovernmental committee within UNESCO responsible for the follow-up and evaluation of the Decade. For this purpose a special session of the Committee, under the double sponsorship of the United Nations and UNESCO, with the participation of high-level experts from its 36 Member States and all the other interested countries, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, should be convened in 1993.

7. The Government of Mexico considered it too early to discuss the question of the evaluation at this stage, that is, two years after the launching of the Decade. At the same time, the reply of Mexico contains some suggestions, in particular, concerning the development of a public information campaign, to be undertaken in co-ordination between all Member States, with the purpose of publicizing the Decade and reviewing and adjusting as necessary projects already launched.

8. The Government of Poland supported the idea of carrying out a mid-Decade evaluation and considers such a review "essential in order to enhance the efficacy of the Decade". It believes that all the partners involved in implementing the goals and objectives of the Decade should thoroughly analyse the impact of measures already taken, so that some activities could be strengthened and others modified in the light of the experience acquired.

9. In the view of the Government of Poland, the 1993 evaluation should focus, first of all, on the progress in the implementation of the most essential objective - the acknowledgement of the cultural dimension of development. The interrelationship between the Cultural Development Decade and the fourth United Nations development decade also has to be carefully assessed. The Government of Poland also suggested that activities proposed by Member States for the second half of the Decade and their financing should also be considered.

10. The Government of Poland believes that since the Decade has entered its operational phase, "it is all the more desirable to undertake a major mid-point evaluation".

11. The Government of Guyana stated that it welcomed the conducting of a mid-Decade review.

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